United Nations S/2015/315

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 May 2015

Original: English

Letter dated 6 May 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to submit to you the address to the nation delivered by the President of the Republic of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, on 6 May 2015 (see annex).

I kindly request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Albert **Shingiro**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

15-07187 (E) 080515 080515

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 6 May 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: French]

Address to the nation by Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic

Dear Burundians and friends of Burundi,

1. Allow me, at the outset, to give thanks to Almighty God, who guides and assists all our efforts to consolidate peace, reconcile our people and advance our country's development. All honour and glory be to Him.

2. Recently our country has been going through an especially difficult period. Violence has increased, particularly since the National Council for the Defence of Democracy-Forces for the Defence of Democracy officially nominated a candidate for the upcoming presidential election. It was this nomination that triggered the ongoing demonstrations, as it was regarded in some quarters as unconstitutional.

3. In accordance with article 228 of the Constitution, the Senate put the matter before the Constitutional Court, which has just ruled that a decision by direct universal suffrage to renew the mandate of the incumbent President would not violate the Burundian Constitution of 18 March 2005.

Fellow countrymen and women and friends of Burundi,

4. Good governance is woven of respect for the law, the principles of dialogue and consensus, the defence of democracy and the promotion of human rights.

5. With this conviction in mind, I should like to bring the following to the attention of the national and international community:

(a) I have taken due note of the Constitutional Court's ruling in its entirety and pledge to abide by it;

(b) I hereby inform the national and international community that if the Burundian people again put their faith in me, this will be my final term of office, as stipulated in the ruling of the Constitutional Court;

(c) I call upon Burundi's partners and friends to play a more active role in strengthening the peace and security gains we have made and in supporting our country's development efforts;

(d) I pledge to continue the efforts towards lasting national reconciliation that have been made since the signing of the Arusha Agreement and the Global Ceasefire Agreement, on which the current Constitution is based;

(e) In the interest of consolidating peace throughout the country, I ask that special protection be extended to internally displaced persons still living at the sites provided for them;

(f) I welcome the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a means of helping Burundians to know the truth about all the troubles that have beset the country since it gained independence;

(g) I call on political leaders and certain civil society organizations to stop using civilians, particularly children, as human shields in acts of violence. All schoolchildren and students should go back to class without delay; they belong in school, not in the streets. I therefore order the immediate release of all children under the age of 18 who have been arrested during the demonstrations;

(h) All primary- and secondary-school examinations should take place as originally scheduled. I ask law enforcement to provide security at the sites of such examinations;

(i) Adults who have been arrested and jailed because of the demonstrations may also be released, once the movement has ceased;

(j) I regard the protection of civilians as a priority;

(k) I call on political leaders to go out and mobilize their party members to ensure a large turnout in the upcoming elections. This is the only foreseeable solution to the current problem.

Fellow countrymen and women and friends of Burundi,

6. The demonstrations now taking place, particularly in our country's capital, have caused enormous and multifaceted damage. I regret the loss of human life that has occurred since the start of the violence, both among civilians and among the defence and security forces. I offer my deepest condolences to the bereaved families.

7. To all stakeholders involved in the forthcoming elections, I am happy to announce that measures have been taken to ensure a peaceful electoral campaign. I wish to reassure the national and international community that the electoral process will be free, transparent and inclusive, and will be conducted in an atmosphere of calm.

8. Once again, I call on the international community, the United Nations, the European Union, the African Union, the East African Community and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region to come to Burundi in order to witness the electoral process.

9. I invite the men and women of the media to regroup and to do their work in strict compliance with their professional code of ethics.

10. I call on the National Communication Council to monitor the situation closely on a daily basis. Journalists should bear in mind the two important aspects of their duties: to provide people with information and to strengthen peace and reconciliation among Burundians.

Fellow countrymen and women and friends of Burundi,

11. In conclusion, I would like to call on my fellow citizens to remain calm and to comply with the decisions of public institutions.

12. To those politicians who might have claims to make, I call upon them to do so in accordance with the law and to express them clearly, so as to safeguard the peace and security achieved in Burundi.

13. I invite the people of Burundi to remain calm. It is my pledge that, if elected, I will continue working to consolidate peace and to promote the comprehensive development of our beloved country.

14. I call upon all Burundians and foreigners living in Burundi to reject any action that could undermine peace and security, which were regained at such great cost to our country and which must be maintained.

15. I call for an immediate end to the ongoing demonstrations so that we can prepare for the elections with peace in our hearts and continue to build a united, peaceful and prosperous Burundi.

16. God bless Burundi and Burundians. Thank you.